

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

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FM AMCONSUL MONTREAL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8245

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL QUEBEC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTREAL 1710

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJ: QUEBEC ELECTION: PINARD PROJECTS PQ MAJORITY GOVERNMENT

REF: MONTREAL 1697

1. MAURICE PINARD, MCGILL UNIVERSITY SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR WHO DIRECTED POLL PUBLISHED TODAY, CALLED ON CG TO DISCUSS IMPLICATIONS AS HE SEES THEM. MOST IMPORTANTLY, HE SEES MAJOR VICTORY, 70 OR MORE SEATS, BY PARTI QUEBECOIS. HE ALSO RAISED POSSIBILITY LIBERALS MIGHT NOT EVEN BE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION THOUGH HE WAS IFFY ON THIS POINT.
  2. HIS REASONING IS BASED NOT ONLY ON PUBLISHED DATA TO DATE (MORE COMING OUT TOMORROW) WHICH SHOWS STEADY LEVEL (AROUND FIFTY PERCENT) OF PQ SUPPORT IN EACH OF VARIOUS REGIONS OF PROVINCE, WHEREAS THERE ARE FLUCTUATIONS IN SUPPORT OF OTHER PARTIES BY REGION, BUT ALSO ON UNPUBLISHED QUESTION: "IF YOU KNEW LIBERALS WERE GOING TO LOSE, WOULD IT CAUSE YOU TO CHANGE YOUR VOTE AND, IF SO, HOW?" TO WHICH RELATIVELY SMALL PERCENTAGE RESPONDED THEY WOULD RETURN TO LIBERAL FOLD. IN FACT, SOME NOW INTENDING TO VOTE LIBERAL WOULD SWITCH AWAY, PRIMARILY TO UN BUT SOME TO PQ.
  3. PART OF HIS CERTAINTY ALSO BASED ON FACT THAT LEVEL OF SATIS-
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FACTION WITH GOVERNMENT AND LEVEL OF VOTING INTENT COINCIDE

(TWENTY-SEVEN PERCENT EACH), WHICH HE SAYS IS TRADITIONAL TEST FOR RULING PARTY. IN LAST ELECTION, POLLS SHOWED FIFTY-FIVE PERCENT SATISFACTION AND THAT PROVED TO BE LEVEL OF SUPPORT AT BALLOT BOX.

4. HE ATTRIBUTES CONTRAST BETWEEN 50 O/O SUPPORT FOR PQ AND GREATER (58 O/O) SUPPORT FOR ANTI-SEPARATISM, I.E., LOSS OF FEAR OF PQ, TO TWO FACTORS, THE OBVIOUS ONE BEING THE REFERENDUM PLEDGE, THE OTHER BEING "ISSUE HAS BEEN AROUND SO LONG PEOPLE ARE USED TO IDEA." ADDS THAT SAME ATTITUDE PREVAILS AMONG MODERATES (TOWARD QUEBEC) IN TORONTO.

5. HE OFFERED SEVERAL SCENARIOS FOR BLUNDER IN CALLING PREMATURE ELECTION, SUCH AS ASSUMPTION THAT FEAR OF PQ WOULD AGAIN BRING BACK DISSATISFIED ANGLOS AND ETHNICS, BUT SUGGESTED ALSO QUITE SERIOUSLY THAT LIBERALS KNEW THEY COULD NOT WIN AND FELT THAT THEIR PROSPECTS FOR BEING OFFICIAL OPPOSITION WITH PERHAPS FORTY SEATS WERE MUCH BETTER THIS FALL THAN NEXT SPRING. IN THIS CONNECTION HE STRESSED FACT THAT LIBERALS HAVE (AND HAD) THEIR OWN POLLS AND COULD NOT REPEAT NOT HAVE BEEN UNAWARE THE INTENSITY OF DISSATISFACTION WITH THEIR GOVERNMENT. GIVEN THE LIKELIHOOD OF INCREASED TAXES AND UNEMPLOYMENT NEXT YEAR, VIGOROUS OPPOSITION COULD MAKE PQ GOVERNMENT LOOK VERY BAD, PREVENT SUCCESSFUL REFERENDUM DURING ITS TERM, AND REGAIN POWER IN FOLLOWING ELECTION. HE THINKS THEY HAVE OVERCALCULATED THEIR PROSPECTS EVEN IN THIS SCENARIO. HE GIVES LIBERALS NOTHING IN EAST MONTREAL (WHICH INCLUDES RIDINGS OF PM BOURASSA, MIN BIENVENUE, MIN BACON, DEPUTY SPEAKER BLANK) AND SOME OF WEST MONTREAL, SUCH AS D'ARCY MCGEE (MIN. GOLDBOLLM'S SEAT). NOT HOPEFUL FOR MARCHAND IN LOUIS-HEBERT, OR OTHERS ELSEWHERE; "VERY GLOOMY PICTURE FOR LIBERALS."

6. PARTING SHOT WAS: I DON'T AGREE WITH THEIR (PQ) POLICY BUT I HAVE TO HOPE, PROFESSIONALLY, THAT MY PROJECTIONS ARE RIGHT." HE CLEARLY BELIEVES THEY ARE AND THAT HIS DATA PROVE IT.

7. RYAN EDITORIAL IN LE DEVOIR TODAY IN SHARP CONTRAST TO YESTERDAY'S CONVERSATION (MONTREAL'S 1699). SOME KEY STATEMENTS ARE: "FAR FROM ENFEEBLING THE PARTI QUEBECOIS,  
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THE PREMATURE ELECTION THAT HE (BOURASSA) HAS CALLED SEEMS TO HAVE, ABOVE ALL, FORCED HIS OWN PARTY TO A RENDING REVISION OF A LEADERSHIP WHICH APPEARED UNTOUCHABLE ONLY A SHORT TIME AGO." "THE PQ, FOR ITS PART, SEEMS TO BE FACED WITH A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE. THAT OF HAVING TO OFFER, FIRST OF ALL, A SOLID AND EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT BEFORE EVEN BEING ABLE TO RAISE EXPLICITLY AND OFFICIALLY THE QUESTION WHICH CONSTITUTES, IN MANY RESPECTS, ITS OWN REASON FOR BEING. BECAUSE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, THE

QUEBECOIS, BY REASON OF THE DEFICIENCY OF POWER FROM WHICH THEY  
HAVE SUFFERED, ASPIRE ABOVE ALL ELSE, IT SEEMS, TO BE WELL  
GOVERNED." ALTHOUGH RYAN ALSO NOTES THAT SOMETHING COULD CAUSE  
POLL RESULTS TO TURN AROUND BEFORE THE ELECTION, HE CLEARLY  
DOESN'T REALLY EXPECT IT. CONTRAST IN TONE WITH YESTERDAY'S  
ASSERTION ABOUT LIBERAL MAJORITY IS SIMPLY TOO GREAT TO REFLECT  
ANYTHING BUT RESIGNATION.  
HARPER

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